

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-07 NSC-10 SPC-03 SS-20 RSC-01 PRS-01

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 7008

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 6074

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR MARR SP XF

SUBJECT: ALLEGED USAF OVERFLIGHTS OF SPAIN

1. AT CONCLUSION OF TODAY'S SPECIAL JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING, FOREIGN MINISTER LOPEZ RODO WAS HANDED EUROPA PRESS PRESS RELEASE DATED MADRID, OCTOBER 19, WHICH HE READ AT MEETING AND SUBSEQUENTLY GAVE ME.

2. TRANSLATION OF TEXT OF RELEASE IS AS FOLLOWS:

BEGIN TEXT. THE NEWS THAT THE CORRESPONDENT IN ALMERIA HAS SENT US SAYS TEXTUALLY:

FOR THE PAST FOUR DAYS ALMERIA HAS BEEN DIRECTLY OVERFLOWN BY AMERICAN AIRCRAFT THAT HAVE ESTABLISHED AN AIRLIFT FROM THE US TO ISRAEL, THE COUNTRY TO WHICH THEY ARE SUPPLYING-- AFTER A STOP IN THE AZORES--WAR MATERIEL TO USE AGAINST THE ARAB INVASION.

ACCORDING TO AN EMPLOYEE OF THE CONTROL TOWER OF THE ALMERIA AIRPORT, THE OVERFLIGHTS OF AIRCRAFT APPROACH ABOUT 100 A DAY. THEY COME FROM THE STRAIT OF GIBRALTAR AND ARE ENROUTE TO THE EAST.

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THE AIRCRAFT ARE VISIBLE FROM THE CITY ON CLOUDLESS DAYS

GIVEN THEIR PROXIMITY AND THE FACT THAT THEY OVERFLY SPANISH JURISDICTIONAL WATERS, AND THEIR SOUND IS ALSO AUDIBLE WHEN THE SKY IS CLOUDY. THEY ARE 4-ENGINE JET C-5 "GALAXY" CARGO AIRCRAFT--THE LARGEST AIR TRANSPORT OF THE US AIR FORCE, THAT CAN CARRY A MAXIMUM OF 100 TONS OF CARGO. THEY ARE ESCORTED BY PHANTOM FIGHTER BOMBERS. THEY FLY AT ABOUT 10,000 METERS AND AT APPROXIMATE SPEED OF 850 KILOMETERS PER HOUR.

WELL INFORMED CIRCLES IN ALMERIA HAVE POINTED OUT THAT THE AIRCRAFT OF THE AIRLIFT ARE USING THE SAME ROUTE USED BY THE AMERICAN MILITARY AIRCRAFT IN MARCH 1966 THAT CRASHED WITH SEVERAL ATOMIC BOMBS ABOARD NEAR PALOMARES IN THIS PROVINCE. THE SAME CIRCLES ADD THAT THE SIGHT OF THE AIRCRAFT AND THE RECOLLECTION OF PALOMARES HAVE PROVOKED A CERTAIN SENSATION OF PANIC AMONG THE POPULATION OF ALMERIA. END TEXT OF RELEASE.

2. IT IS URGENT THAT I RECEIVE IMMEDIATELY RECOMMENDATION AS TO WHAT STATEMENTS I CAN MAKE TO (A) SPANISH GOVERNMENT AND (B) PRESS REGARDING THIS RELEASE.

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